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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -  
ROBERT PALLADINO  
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

1. Summary: Almost all the major Chinese-language Taipei dailies focused April 27 on the violent clashes at CKS Airport between Pan-Blue and Pan-Green supporters Tuesday morning when they "saw off" KMT Chairman Lien Chan as he embarked on his eight-day trip to China. The centrist "China Times" is the only Chinese-language newspaper that reported on Lien's China trip on its front page, with the headline: "Sixty years later, Lien Chan arrives in Nanjing." The "China Times" and the two pro-independence newspapers - "Liberty Times" and "Taiwan Daily" - all carried the same news story on their page two which quoted President Chen Shui-bian as saying that there should be reconciliation in Taiwan before cross-strait talks are conducted. The pro-unification "United Daily News" reported on its second page that Lien and Chinese President Hu Jintao will likely talk about building a military security mechanism across the Taiwan Strait.

2. A "United Daily News" editorial discussed President Chen's April 25 telephone conversation with Lien prior to the latter's departure, in which Chen mentioned that "the [Taiwan] government does not deny 'the contents of the talks in 1992,' but it is a historical fact that 'there was no 1992 consensus.'" The editorial said Chen's remarks indicate that he might accept the consensus if both sides of the Taiwan Strait agree to forgo the term "the 1992 consensus" and use "the contents of talks [between the two sides] in 1992" in its place. A limited-circulation, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" editorial commented on Lien's China trip, saying it is full of big challenges as he has to find common ground for both sides on a range of bitter disputes. End summary.

A) "The April 25 Telephone Conversation [between President Chen and Lien Chan]: Lien and Hu Might as well Give Chen Shui-bian a Hand?"

The pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 600,000] editorialized (4/27):

"What's noteworthy is that during his telephone conversation with [KMT Chairman] Lien Chan April 25, President Chen took the initiative to mention 'the 1992 consensus,' and both men chatted about it on the phone. But the discussion [about the 1992 consensus] that was evident in the press release announced by the KMT failed to appear in the press release issued by the Presidential Office later. .

"It is said that Chen said on the phone: the [Taiwan] government does not deny 'the contents of the talks in 1992,' but it is a historical fact that 'there was no 1992 consensus.'

"Chen's remarks seemed to say: he believes that the words 'the 1992 consensus' were created by some other people later and that there was no such term in 1992. Therefore, Chen does not acknowledge the words 'the 1992 consensus,' but he does not deny 'the contents of the talks [between both sides of the Taiwan Strait] in 1992.'

"Such an approach of fickleness and paying excessive attention to wording has again put Chen in a dilemma. This is because Chen has once said 'the 1992 consensus' was 'one country, two systems'; it was [an attempt to] 'annihilate the Republic of China' and it was 'capitulationism.' Regardless of whether these statements can be called 'the 1992 consensus,' are they the 'the contents of the talks in 1992'? It is thus evident that when Chen said he does 'not deny the contents of the talks [by both sides of the Taiwan Strait] in 1992,' the contents he referred to were definitely not the terminology he demonized earlier. .

"The chat about 'the 1992 consensus' during the April 25 telephone conversation [between Chen and Lien]

indicate that Chen was trying to check out Beijing's attitude via his conversation with Lien. Chen is of course too embarrassed to say that he acknowledges 'the 1992 consensus' now, but 'the contents of the talks in 1992' as called by Chen are definitely not the terminology that he once demonized. In other words, if both sides of the Taiwan Strait agree to term 'the 1992 consensus' as 'the contents of the talks in 1992,' chances are that Chen might accept and acknowledge [the consensus.] The reason why the Presidential Office deliberately deleted such a discussion [in its press release] was because it wanted to play down its fickleness and to leave some leeway for this major political probe. .

"If Chen's remark that he 'does not deny the contents of the talks in 1992' is an approach to probe [Beijing's attitude], we hope that both Lien and [Chinese President] Hu Jintao would give Chen a hand by not being tied down by the words 'the 1992 consensus.' They might as well come up with a broader discourse on 'the contents of the talks in 1992' that is more applicable or acceptable for both sides. ."

B) "Lien's Peace Mission to PRC Filled with Big Challenges"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] noted in an editorial (4/27):

". Indeed, the mission Lien carries with him is extremely challenging. On the one hand, he must have the courage to firmly defend Taiwan's political sovereignty and unequivocally reflect the opinion of the majority of its 23 million people, even though he is traveling in a private capacity and as the leader of his own party.

"At the same time, Lien has to use his wisdom and political prowess to get his Beijing hosts to listen to him carefully and to find common ground on a range of bitter disputes so as to create an atmosphere for reconciliation and, ultimately, for action by the governments of the two sides to reopen dialogue. ."

KEEGAN